search Scientists' hypothesis on the buried channel of ancient Saraswati river in Rajasthan desert remains to be confirmed.

Successful tubewells constructed in the western Rajasthan generally yield 13 m to 45m per hour. The Government propose construction of more water supply tubewells in the Rajasthan desert area.

Seizure of smuggled gold

1321. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantity (with value) of the smuggled gold seized at various places in the country at the end of 1987 and by what percentage the seizure of smuggled gold has risen as compared to the gold seized in 1985 and 1986;

(b) to what extent the smuggling of gold into the country is responsible for the rise in gold prices and what is the overall effect of the Gold Control Act in regulating the use of gold and containing the prices; and

(c) what is the percentage of rise/decline in the production of gold in the country at the end of 1987 and what steps have been taken by Government so far to locate and to explore the potential gold mines in the country, stating the results achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) The total quantity and value of smuggled gold seized at the various places in the country during the years 1985, 1986, and 1987 is given below:—

Year	Quantity (in Kgs.)	Value (Rs. in crores)
1985	2525	51.89
1986	2174	46.66
1987	2245	65.44 (prov.)

The quantity of gold seized in 1987 is 4% higher than the quantity seized in 1986 but 12 per cent lower than the quantity seized in 1985. The value of gold seized in 1987 is 28,70 per cent higher than the value of gold seized in 1986 and 21 per cent higher than the value of the gold seized in 1985.

(b) Since smuggling is a clandestine activity, it is not feasible to determine the extent to which smuggling of gold into the country is responsible for rise in prices of gold into the country which depends on various factors. some of the factors responsible for the rise in price of gold are:—

(i) Seasonal demand on account of marriages etc;

(ii) Shortage of ready stock;

(iii) Effective anti-smuggling measures;

(iv) Higher overseas price of gold; and

(v) Fall in the value of the dollar. Since gold is not an essential commodity, Government has not found it necessary to take any steps to regulate the prices of gold. The Gold Control Act only regulates the possession of gold.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Visit of industrial team from Belgium

1322. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an industrial team from Belgium visited India during the second week of February, 1988;

(b) if so, the names of the personnel of the team;

(c) the nature of discussions held by the team with the officials of the Government of India; and

(d) the decisions arrived at?